

Dear FCC, I support the suggestion by ARRL to offer a Novice-style license with limited HF Phone privileges. It is my belief that the entry-level license should be revised from time to time to make sure it is appealing and relevant to people wanting to participate in the Amateur Radio Service. Their proposal for this license class definitely does this.

I am generally opposed to the remainder of the proposal. In particular, I oppose consolidation of all licensees into three license classes. If Technician, Technician Plus and Advanced licensees wish to upgrade, it is a fairly easy matter to take an exam to do so. Testing opportunities through the VEC system are widely available.

The logic of ARRL with regard to these dormant license classes creating a data processing problem is dubious. From 1952-1967, the FCC issued no new Advanced class licenses, just renewing the ones already issued. It did not cause any significant data processing problems then, even though the record-keeping was performed on systems that were much more labor-intensive than the ones in use today. It just isn't that hard to leave the database alone, and it just isn't that much work to maintain entries for these license classes in the Amateur Radio Service frequency allocation tables, which are only revised every few years or so. It would only become a problem if these tables were being revised every few weeks or months, which they are most definitely not.

The Morse code requirement should be retained for the General and Amateur Extra class licenses. The proposed Novice license will offer significant HF privileges without requiring a code test.

John Covington